

TRANSNEWS

Management Edition

Volume 46



Improve Your Safety Meetings

P.A. Post Agency offers unsurpassed resources to assist in your commitment to safety and loss control. If there are any questions please contact us.

Inside this issue:

Improve Your Safety Meetings **1**

Quick Tips

Don't Be a Demotivator. Your job as a leader is to get and keep your people motivated and working toward the common goal. Demeaning them, to their face or to others, erodes their motivation. So does dismissively telling them that their ideas are "stupid." Watch your own actions to be sure you aren't defeating your own efforts by demotivating your people.

Some safety meetings are better than others, but most could be conducted more effectively. During the meeting the leader ends up reading the safety meeting instead of leading the safety meeting. Often times the leader is too far engaged in the meeting notes, handouts, checklists or other meeting material to conduct a safety meeting that actually accomplishes the goal of raising awareness in the participants' minds.

The main problem with the reading approach to a safety meeting is that it does not engage people. It allows us to deliver facts but it does not help us communicate. Communication only happens when we have connected with people, and they have received, accepted and taken ownership of the message. That, in turn, happens only when we engage our audience.

What we need to do as safety meeting leaders is to create a situation in which the audience is fully vested

in the topic, views the topic as wholly relevant to them, gives undivided attention to the message, and actively (even enthusiastically) participates in and contributes to that meeting.

Here are four steps to change the approach to safety meetings and transform the typical safety meeting into an engaging conversation that will linger in the participants' minds long after the meeting has ended.

Tip 1: Lead It, Don't Read It

A strong leadership presence is critical to successfully engaging others in safety meetings. This entails a combination of body language, voice projection, passion and sincerity, care and concern, and strong eye contact. When meeting leaders spend more time reading notes, slides or forms than they do making eye contact with the audience, that usually signifies a lack of preparedness and lack of confidence or familiarity with the material. This

may also signify to your participants a lack of passion and an absence of real communication, which tends to have the team walking away from the meeting uninspired.

Internalizing talking points well in advance and practicing delivery of those points beforehand builds confidence, enables us to speak about them with passion, and allows us to establish and maintain eye contact with everyone in the room without having to rely heavily on notes. Participants are more likely to receive this message only if they can see that we believe in it and are passionate about it.

Tip 2: Ask, Don't Tell

Facilitation is not the opposite of lecture, but it is pretty close. With facilitation, we talk less and the participants talk more. Meeting leaders often place too much responsibility on themselves to make the meeting work. As a result, the meeting often succeeds or fails based on our

Meetings (Continued on Page 2)

Meetings (Continued from Page 1)

contribution and on our ability to deliver the message. Even if we do succeed on that front, we still may not have adequately transferred ownership of the safety concept to the participants.

Keep this adage in mind: “No one disagrees with their own ideas.” When we lecture instead of facilitate, we may be able to provide great ideas and suggestions, but we’ve done nothing to transfer ownership of the ideas. As a result, they may or may not act on them. But, if the idea is instead theirs, they will not only take ownership for that idea but will likely follow through with it as well.

The best way to accomplish this is to ask a few well-placed questions during the meeting. Questions that engage people and are open-ended rather than closed-ended. A question such as, “What are we going to do to drive safely today?” is far better than “Is everyone going to drive safely today?” The latter question gives your audience an easy out with a simple nod of the head and the conversation is over. The former invites elaboration and sets a tacit expectation that a conversation will follow.

Tip 3: Make the Safety-Meeting Leader a Floating Role

Most organizations subscribe to the notion that safety responsibility resides with each employee. Yet, if the responsibility for safety communication in safety meetings is perceived by everyone else to be the unique domain of the safety manager/supervisor, they will never fully adopt ownership of safety. Being responsible for leading a meeting and presenting a safety topic to peers reinforces the notion that real ownership for safety, and

real leadership in safety, belongs to each individual.

Rotating safety-meeting leaders gets everyone involved. It places everyone in a leadership role and creates a shared experience that results in everyone paying more attention and participating more actively at each meeting in order to support their team members. These leaders will eventually become audience members when it is another person’s turn to lead the meeting. People tend to become more engaged in activities that others are leading when they know their turn for leading a similar activity is coming. Sharing responsibility for leading safety meeting enhances personal ownership for safety, makes everyone a safety leader, and creates a climate that is ripe for developing and coaching safety leadership skills.

Tip 4: Focus on People, Not Policy

This is the most critical point. Meeting content sometimes suggests we are more concerned about compliance than culture. The meeting’s message may include the latter, but it should never exclude the former.

People are more readily engaged and respond more favorably to a safety message when the focus is on what matters most to them. Messages that focus on compliance, policies, regulations and statistics spark interest and curiosity, but they don’t inspire people to do the right thing when no one is looking. That requires reaching their core values – which usually have something to do with family.

For example, reading an incident report to raise awareness about hazards and how to avoid them can be done in a manner that attempts

to get the audience to participate, which is a good start, but true engagement requires much more.

A better approach would be to tell a story about an incident, and focus on the effect it had on people and their families (e.g., How did it impact the employee, his/her family, coworkers and friends? What was the true “cost” of that incident in terms of people?). We engage our audience by creating a vicarious experience for them.

Such an experience is one in which participants feel the impact, find themselves empathizing with those involved, and relate the story to their own lives, even though they haven’t personally experienced that incident, nor necessarily know the people involved. If we do this successfully, there will be little need to appeal to policy and regulations to convince them to do things the right way. It’s something they’ll want to do out of desire to spare their families the cost of an incident.

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If you have any questions or comments about this newsletter, or any ideas for future issues of **SAFETY TIPS**, contact Brad Post at:

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SAFETY TIPS

Driver Edition



Managing Stress

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Stress. Many of us are faced with it every day, but we might not know how to deal with it. It is important to learn how to handle stress because it can affect our performance and relationships in our work and home. At work, stress can lead to distraction and cause an unfortunate accident. At home, stress can put a strain on family relationships.

Stress usually occurs when there are changes in our lives and we feel that we don't have enough

resources to deal with those changes and demands. It occurs not only from negative life experiences, but also from positive ones. People react and deal with stress differently, but common stress symptoms include upset stomach, fatigue, tight neck muscles, irritability and headaches. Some people react to stress by eating or drinking too much, losing sleep or smoking cigarettes. Stress may also make you more susceptible to illnesses,

including the common cold, ulcers and some cancers.

The first step to managing stress is to identify your "stressors" – those things that are making you react. Stressors may not only be events that cause you to feel sad, frightened, anxious or happy. You can cause stress through your thoughts, feelings and expectations. Look at the list below. Which cause you stress? Can you think of other stressors?

Stress (Continued on Page 2)

Having a Safety Attitude

It seems as if humans do their best to avoid pain and death. Despite this, many of us behave in a manner that is a threat to our own well-being. There are basically two reasons why this happens:

1. Lack of knowledge – What you don't know CAN hurt you!
2. Attitude – What is your attitude toward safety?

When asked about safety,

some people say they are all for it and do their best to work safely all the time, while others may complain about any safety efforts made or taken. The difference between the two folks is one of attitude.

Your attitude affects almost all you do and how you do it.

Have you ever noticed that some people who are successful in life, or are just happy, tend to have a

positive attitude? And so it is with safety. Safety rules, regulations and procedures are written to protect you and others from harm; they are not written to make your work life more uncomfortable or inconvenient!

If you cooperate in safety matters and do your best to work safely, not only is there less chance of you or somebody else getting

Attitude (Continued on Page 2)

Inside this issue:

Managing Stress	1
Having a Safety Attitude	1
Roadway Hazard: Deer	2

Stress (Continued from Page 1)

- Not enough time
- Unexpected change
- Family problems
- Extra responsibility
- Personality clashes
- Money difficulties

Everyone has to deal with life's problems. A key to dealing with the big and little everyday stressors is coping with stress in a positive way.

1. **Acceptance** – Many of us worry about things we have no control over. One way to manage stress

is to accept when things are beyond your control. It may be helpful to think positive thoughts such as, "Someday I'll laugh about this," or "It's a learning experience."

2. **Attitude** – Try to focus on the positive side of situations. Ask yourself, "What good can come out of this?" "What can I learn from this situation?" and "How can I handle this better when it comes up again?" Solutions come easier when you focus on the positive, and your stress level will be reduced.
3. **Perspective** – We often worry

about things that never happen. Keep things in perspective by asking yourself, "How important is this situation?" "Can I do anything about it?" "In five years, will I even remember it happened?"

Think about the situations in your life that cause you stress. Are they important or unimportant? Are they controllable or uncontrollable? If they are controllable events, you can take action to change the situation; if they are uncontrollable, you can use your skills in acceptance, attitude and perspective to reduce the stress.

Roadway Hazards: Deer

Fall and early winter brings an increase in deer activity, and drivers are reminded to watch carefully for deer darting across and along roadways.

Fall marks the deer's breeding season and deer pay less attention and become bolder as they move around and travel greater distances seeking mates. Primarily nocturnal feeders, deer are most active between sunset and sunrise. Other factors which affect the travel patterns of deer in the fall are farmers actively harvesting the last of their crops and preparing for

spring planting, increased activity in the woods from hunters and outdoor enthusiasts enjoying the last remaining days of good weather.

By following a few safety tips, drivers can help reduce the possibility of being involved in a crash with a deer. Remember to:

- Slow down, use caution, and increase following distance, particularly where deer crossing signs are posted;

- Be aware of increased deer movement;
- Be especially watchful during morning and evening hours when wildlife is most active;
- Exercise caution when one deer crosses a roadway, since deer often travel in small herds;
- Always wear your seat belt;
- Never drive impaired; and
- Keep your headlights on – day and night, good and bad weather.

Attitude (Continued from Page 1)

injured, but you won't have to be "at odds" with your supervisor who is doing his/her job by enforcing safety rules, regulations and policies. When you observe safety rules, regulations and policies, you should feel more confident because on-the-job injuries should not occur, and you can go home in one piece.

Nobody is perfect; even the best of us can forget or make an error in

judgment. Therefore, to maximize our safety efforts, we must look out for one another. If someone tells you that you are not working safely, don't become angry or defensive; that person is just looking out for your well-being. If you didn't know you were doing something unsafe, be thankful that your actions were noticed before you or someone else was injured. If you simply forgot the safe way to do something or got a little

careless, be grateful that someone cares enough to get you back on track. If you see someone doing something unsafe, speak up, but do so diplomatically.

Remember, attitude affects behavior! If you have a positive attitude towards safety, the odds are that you will exhibit safe behavior, while a negative attitude will only cause conflict, stress and eventually a mishap.



Simple Step-by-Step Plan to Stop Smoking

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So you decided to stop smoking? Great! It's one of the best things you can do for your health.

But quitting isn't easy, the average person attempts to quit six times before succeeding. Quitting is tough because nicotine – the addictive ingredient in tobacco, is as addictive as heroin or cocaine, according to the American Cancer Society.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take to set yourself up for success and kick the habit for good.

Set a date: Pick a day and time in the near future that you expect to be relatively stress-free so you can prepare to quit smoking.

Quitting when you have a big project at work, or even

when you have something happy on your calendar like a birthday party, can be more challenging.

Write down your reasons:

Consider why you want to stop smoking and jot the reasons down. You can refer to them once you quit when you get a craving. Here are a few universal reasons:

- My risk of cancer, heart attacks, lung disease, stroke, and other diseases will drop.
- My blood pressure will go down.
- I'll look better. My skin will be more hydrated and less wrinkled, my teeth will look less yellow and my fingers won't be stained with nicotine.
- I'll save money.
- My hair, clothes, car, and home won't reek of smoke.
- I'll have more energy.

- I'll set a better example for my kids, friends, and family.

Get your friends and family on board:

The more support you have, the more likely you are to quit smoking. Ask your loved ones to help keep you distracted by taking walks or playing games, and bear with you if you become cranky or irritable as you experience nicotine withdrawal.

Tell any smokers not to smoke around you, or better yet, ask your smoking buddies to quit with you.

Identify your triggers: You'll be most tempted to smoke during the same times you do now. Knowing your habits and what situations may set off a craving will help you plan ahead for distractions.

For example, you may typically smoke while driving, drinking, after

Stop Smoking (Continued on Page 2)

Inside this issue:

Simple Step-by-Step Plan to Stop Smoking **1**

Stop Smoking: I'll Save Money **2**

Stop Smoking (Continued from Page 1)

dinner, or when you're feeling stressed. Create healthy distractions to head off potential smoking triggers. If you smoke while you drive, keep a pack of gum on hand, or if you smoke after dinner, plan to take a walk afterwards.

Anticipate cravings: It's expected that you'll experience nicotine cravings as your body begins to go through withdrawal. The good news is that cravings aren't endless. They generally last for five to ten minutes.

When cravings strike, focus on something else: Drink a glass of water, review your list of reasons for quitting, take deep breaths,

play with your pets — do whatever it takes until the craving subsides.

Distract yourself: Keep celery stalks, carrot sticks, nuts, or gum handy to give your mouth something to do when cravings occur. And finding some way to occupy your hands — knitting, woodworking, cooking, yoga, or yard work — will help keep your mind off smoking.

Expect to feel a little off: Nicotine withdrawal can make you feel anxious, cranky, sad, and even make it hard for you to fall asleep. It helps to know that all these feelings are a normal and temporary part of the process.

Throw out all your cigarettes: Yes, even that emergency one you

stashed away. If you don't have cigarettes on hand, it will make it that much easier to stay the course when a craving hits.

Reward yourself: With all the money you'll save by not buying tobacco, you can buy new clothes, splurge on dinner, or start a new hobby. Some people keep their cigarette money in a jar, and then reward themselves each week.

Talk to your doctor about cessation medications: If you're not sure you can go cold turkey, don't. Speak with your doctor about over-the-counter (OTC) and prescription medications that can make quitting easier.

Stop Smoking: I'll Save Money

Money. It's always on our minds, especially in the current economical environment that we find ourselves living. When you look deep into your life, you'll probably find lots of ways to save money. As a smoker, you have a small gold mine, literally at your fingertips. Cigarettes are costing you a small fortune!

If you quit, the amount of money you save will probably shock and amaze you, and may even make you mad. Best of all, it should excite and inspire you to quit smoking.

The true cost of smoking is much more than just cigarettes. Smokers pay more for insurance,

smoking can hinder career advancement, and smoking depreciates assets (such as car and home value). But let's just focus specifically on the dollar amount for buying cigarettes (ignoring gas costs, etc.):

The average price for a pack of cigarettes in the U.S. is \$7.03. Now, let's assume you smoke one pack per day. During the course of a year, those cigarettes are costing you: $365 \times \$7.03 = \$2,566$. So over 20 years, buying cigarettes alone will cost you over \$51,320.

As a smoker you are robbing yourself and your family of thousands of dollars! Your retirement is going up in smoke.

And if you need extra cash right now, cutting out cigarettes will deliver instant results.

At a Glance: The Deeper Costs of Smoking Cigarettes

Cigarettes	\$2,500
Gas	\$120
Health Insurance	\$630
Life Insurance	\$250
Reduced Wages/Salary	\$1,000 - \$5,000
Total Annual Costs	\$4,500 - \$8,500
Decreased Car Value	\$500 - \$3,000
Decreased Home Value	\$1,000 - \$10,000
Total Asset Depreciation Costs	\$1,500 - \$13,000



Within 20 minutes OF QUITTING

Within 20 minutes after you smoke that last cigarette, your body begins a series of changes that continues for years.

20 MINUTES AFTER QUITTING

Your heart rate drops.

12 HOURS AFTER QUITTING

Carbon monoxide level in your blood drops to normal.

2 WEEKS TO 3 MONTHS AFTER QUITTING

Your heart attack risk begins to drop.

Your lung function begins to improve.

1 TO 9 MONTHS AFTER QUITTING

Your coughing and shortness of breath decrease.

1 YEAR AFTER QUITTING

Your added risk for coronary heart disease is half that of a smoker's.

5 YEARS AFTER QUITTING

Your stroke risk is reduced to that of a nonsmoker's 5–15 years after quitting.

10 YEARS AFTER QUITTING

Your lung cancer death rate is about half that of a smoker's.

Your risk of cancers of the mouth, throat, esophagus, bladder, kidney, and pancreas decreases.

15 YEARS AFTER QUITTING

Your risk of coronary heart disease is back to that of a nonsmoker's.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Tobacco Information and Prevention Source.



One thousand Americans stop smoking every day - by dying.



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